

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Action: An Ordinance Suspending the Paper Bag Pass-through Charge During Reevaluation of the Fee

Meeting Date: July 8, 2013
Department: Planning and Development
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Agenda Item Number: 5
Staff Contact: Stephanie Scafa
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ISSUE STATEMENT

Section 6.860 of the Eugene Code, 1971, requires that a retail establishment offering a recyclable paper bag to a customer at the point-of-sale, charge the customer not less than five cents per bag and that the fee charged be indicated on the customer's receipt. On May 13, 2013, the City Council voted to reevaluate the paper bag pass-through fee and bring back an ordinance to suspend the five cent per bag charge during the reevaluation period. The proposed ordinance (Attachment A) will suspend the five-cent-per-bag fee until December 1, 2013.

BACKGROUND and RELATED CITY POLICIES

The City Council adopted Ordinance No. 20498, encouraging the use of reusable bags by banning single-use plastic carryout bags and requiring a five-cent fee for carry-out, recycled paper bags, on October 22, 2012. The ordinance went into effect on May 1, 2013.

Discussion

Eugene is one of over 90 cities nationwide and three within Oregon, that have adopted a ban on single-use carryout plastic bags. Regarding the use of a five-cent fee in Oregon, Portland does not require a five-cent pass-through fee on paper bags while Corvallis does require the charge. The Corvallis City Council recently updated its ordinance to require the five-cent charge be applied only to large grocery style bags.

Public Comment

At the public hearing on June 10, 2013, two people spoke in favor of the proposed ordinance to suspend the five-cent fee and 11 people spoke in opposition to the proposed ordinance to suspend the five-cent fee. Additional comments submitted to the City between May 31, and June 28, 2013, are included in Attachment B.

Triple Bottom Line – Social, Environmental, Economic Impacts

The staff analysis from the February 27, 2012, City Council work session provided overviews of the assumed environmental, social, and economic impacts of the original ordinance to promote reusable bags by banning single-use plastic carryout bags. Prior to ordinance adoption, City staff developed the Bring Your Bag outreach and education campaign, which offers assistance to

Eugene retailers on an as-needed basis. The objective of the campaign is to raise awareness of the purpose and function of the ordinance as well as provide information about where to obtain low-cost or free, reusable bags.

COUNCIL OPTIONS

1. Adopt the proposed ordinance.
2. Take no action.
3. Modify the original ordinance. Depending on the modifications, this might require another public hearing.

SUGGESTED MOTION

No recommended motions at this time.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Proposed Ordinance
- B. Public Comment

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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